



# The International Fancy Guppy Association



Dedicated to Promoting The Fancy Guppy Hobby

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## Getting Gups to a Show

By Stephen Kwartler

This article will hopefully encourage potential exhibitors to feel confident to send or carry their fish to the shows. After many months of work raising your prize specimens to show size, the next step is to allow everyone to admire and judge your guppies. Prepare your guppies for transport by not feeding them at least 6 to 8 hours before bagging them. Avoid bagging more than one fish per bag. I recommend using either 4 x 12 or 3 x 12 inch tube bags. About 3 to 4 ounces of water per fish is all that is needed. The remainder of the bag will hold about 2/3 air. The easiest way to bag your fish is to use a small disposable coffee cup. Fill the cup with the right amount of water, net your entry and put into cup.

Carefully pour the fish into the bag, trap a decent amount of air into the bag and either seal with a knot or rubber band. Take another bag and invert it over the first bag so each entry is double bagged. Use a good waterproof marking pen to label the bag. This should coincide with your bag ID as it appears on the entry form. If you are sending tank or breeder entries, make sure to label the bags correctly. Several breeders continue to send their entries with inadequate water or air and the fish usually suffer. Also several breeders send tank and breeder entries all together in the same bag, and some send entries in only a single bag. I wonder what their reasons are for doing this; is it the cost of shipping, are they trying to save money or is it that they just do not know what is best for their fish?

If you are hand carrying your entries, use a carton that will protect the fish from the weather or any changes in temperature. For those of you bringing in water from home, make sure the containers are okay for using. Boxes for shipping by mail depend on the amount of entries. A few entries can be placed in a Styrofoam bait box or one that is similar, making sure that any empty space is filled with Styrofoam pellets. Plastic bags filled with air can also be used. This will keep the fish bags from moving while in transit. A strong Styrofoam box is needed for the breeder with many entries. A visit to a local pet shop or fish wholesaler is usually the best way to obtain a good large shipping box. After all is packed in the box, make sure to seal the box well, so the box can be used again and again.

Having been involved in many shows and helping with the shipped in entries, I have seen many strange and sometimes amusing boxes of fish. I have seen fish shipped during cool weather in an old cardboard box with a tattered corduroy shirt as insulation. There is the same Midwestern breeder that must feed their females just before they bag them and usually several entries arrive dead, plus the odor is so overwhelming for those unpacking the box. Make sure that your paper work is complete, proper payments for entries and postage are included and any special attention is clearly written on the entry form. It is a good idea when shipping, to contact the host club prior to the event, letting them know that you are sending your entries.

Well, good luck at the shows.

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